Committe on railway mail pay

The American people want a square deal for all. They will approve of a square deal for the railroads, which represent the honest investment of thousands of persons. When they fail in this spirit, the end of the American republic will be at hand.

—*Chicago Tribune, June 18, 1914.*

What the Newspapers Say About Railway Mail Pay

"Cannot the Railroads Have a Little Fair Play?"

(*New York Sun, June 23, 1914.*)

That the railroads of this country are underpaid by from $10,000,000 to $15,000,000 a year for transporting the mails is the conclusion reached, after careful study, by men of such opposed interests as Ralph Peters, President of the Long Island Railroad, and Robert A. Turner, Secretary of the Joint Congressional Committee on Second Class Mail Matter and Compensation for Transportation of Mails. M. O. Lorenz, Associate Statistician of the Interstate Commerce Commission, "thinks the evidence indicates an underpayment of at least 10 per cent.," and recommends a further test of the figures.

Louis D. Brandeis, who, to put it mildly, is not overgenerous to the carrier corporations, finds that "it seems clear that the railway mail service is at present unremunerative" to them.

This condition of underpayment was recognized before the parcel post came into being. Imposing that burden on the railroads without payment for it made the situation more unfair. The railroads complained and Congress, acknowledging the justice of their demand for readjustment, appointed, more than a year ago, the joint committee mentioned above, of which Senator Bourne was made chairman, with Senators Bankhead and Weeks and Representatives Lloyd, Richardson and Tuttle as his associates. This committee undertook an exhaustive study of the subject, planning to devise a scheme of payment fair to the carriers and the Government and elastic enough to accommodate any changes in the service occasioned by future growth and development.

Since then Senator Bourne and Representative Richardson have been retired from the Congress, but because of the importance of the matter intrusted to them they have served without pay on the committee. Its researches have been careful, and the expectation of Congress and the railroads was that its report and recommendations would furnish a sound basis for intelligent legislation on an intricate and highly technical subject.

But while this reasonable and proper method of correcting the inequalities

which mark one detail of the Government's dealing with the railroads was engrossing the attention of those interested in the subject the Post Office Department has had another idea, which came to general knowledge when, at midnight on the evening of the day preceding that on which the joint committee's bill was to have been introduced, Chairman Bourne was informed over the telephone that Postmaster General Burleson "insisted" that Chairman Moon, of the House Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, should introduce a bill of his own and that this should be "recognized as the Administration bill."

By this proceeding, wholly unexpected by the joint committee, the labors of that body and the special knowledge obtained by it were ignored; its recommendations were discarded, and the time and effort it had expended were lost. Why were these sacrifices made? An examination of the committee's bill and of the Moon measure throws light on what might otherwise be a mystery.

The joint committee's bill is confined to railway mail pay, and provides for line rates one cent a mile higher than the Moon bill. The Moon bill also makes the terminal allowances about 25 per cent. lower than the committee bill. Here comparisons must stop, because the committee bill deals with nothing else; here the popular appeal of the Moon bill lies, in the opinion of its authors, because it "hits the roads again," and here is the colored gentleman in the woodpile:

The Moon bill requires that all assistant postmasters, including those now in the classified service, shall take a civil service examination within ninety days. These assistants are mostly officers who have held their jobs because they were competent; those jobs are wanted by hungry Democrats; under the false claim of extending the civil service the Administration will be able to oust some of them and put Democrats in their places.

In this lies the appeal to the Democrats in Congress; add to it that the Moon bill caters to the anti-railroad prejudice of the country, and a strong combination results. The joint committee offers a fair and reasonable adjustment of rates to be paid for service actually performed by the railroads; the Moon bill joins politics to office grabbing, and the Wilson Administration supports the latter.

As for the details of the Moon bill so far as they affect the underpayment of the railroads, which offers the excuse for its introduction, they reveal an utter disregard for the rights of the carriers.

These unfortunates must, under its provisions, provide terminal post offices for handling and distributing the mails, as directed by the Postmaster General.

They must furnish free transportation to the officers of the Post Office Department and the Postal Service traveling on official business, without regard to whether it concerns the railway mail service; the bill puts the railroads at the mercy of the Postmaster General as to the conveyance of the mails in every detail.

It provides that "clerical and other assistance" and office rent for it shall be paid out of the appropriation "for inland transportation by railway routes."

It gives to the Postmaster General power to fix in his discretion payment for carrying all mail matter other than first class, including, of course, the parcel post business.

It betrays in every section whose application makes possible the revelation of such a purpose a design not to treat the carriers fairly, not to pay just rates for services rendered, but still further to milk the roads, to force them to do part of the work for nothing, and generally to starve them in their relations with the Government.

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This amazing product of politics and hunger is to be discussed at a hearing tomorrow. It will not be defended as scientific or suitable; its strength will be in partisan playing for jobs and the supposed hatred of a substantial fraction of the public for railroads. The railroads will be represented, to plead for a consideration of the merits of the case, for a study of the joint committee's report, and to test the boasted love of the American people for fair play for all.

Are the railroads to get that fair play from any department of the Federal Government?

> The roads are entitled to a fair margin of profit for carrying the mails, and it should be a just and fair compensation.
>
> —*Rock Island, Ill., Union, June 15, 1914.*

Railroads Not Being Treated Fairly

(*Indianapolis News, June 19, 1914.*)

There seems to be a general conviction that the railroads are not being treated fairly by the Post Office Department.

The contention is that the carriers, ever since the establishment of the parcel post system, have been compelled to carry an ever-increasing quantity of matter at the old flat rate.

The Post Office Department denies that railroads have been underpaid in the past, but now there appears to be a disposition to be more lenient with regard to the handling of the parcel post business.

A bill embodying the recommendation of the Congressional Commission on Railway Mail Pay probably will be introduced in Congress this session. The Commission has inquired thoroughly into the question, and condemns the present system of compensating the railroads as antiquated, inaccurate and unfair both to carrier and to Government.

Under the present arrangement, the railroads receive annually about fifty-one million dollars for mail transportation.

Under the new rate this would be about ten million dollars a year more, with increases in the future based on growth. It is proposed that the roads be paid according to space and not according to weight, to compensate them for the bulky parcel business. The railroads have expressed dissatisfaction ever since the parcel post was originated. They have no reason to complain that they are not treated fairly in the proposed bill, it appears.

The Government really is as deeply interested as the railroads are, for the parcel post, to be self-supporting, must offer rates based on actual service costs, not on costs that deprive the carriers of the compensation justly due them.

Congress Should Not Legislate Confiscation

(*Providence, R. I., Journal, June 19, 1914.*)

In the discussion at Washington on the question of railway mail payments the intention of the Post Office Department to get service at less than cost is disclosed. No schedule which has in it the element of confiscation should be approved by Congress.

The Government which prosecutes individuals for the acceptance of free passes or rebates on freight cannot consistently offer the railroads less than the regular price for carrying the mails.

The probability is that the Post Office, when all charges are made, is not self-sustaining. BUT THERE SHOULD BE NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL THE EXACT CONDITION OF THE DEPARTMENT—if there is a deficit the people should know all about it; it is most improper to make a better showing than the facts warrant by compelling the railroads to handle the mail at a heavy loss; in fact, such a procedure is palpably dishonest.

The position taken by ex-Senator Bourne, Chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Railway Pay, that the rate should give the railroads the returns per car mile derived from the average passenger traffic, is good in that it provides for adequate compensation.

While investigation may show the desirability of amendments in detail, the spirit of the Bourne plan should not be departed from —Congress should see that the legitimate expenses of the mail service are paid in full.

The inevitable result of the postal plan of "getting something for nothing," should it be adopted by Congress, will be the cutting of transportation facilities.

Money lost on Government contracts must be made up in some way. The Government should pay a fair price for mail transportation to the end that the people may not be deprived of good cars and frequent trains.

IT SHOULD BE UNNECESSARY TO HAVE A LONG DISCUSSION ON A SIMPLE QUESTION OF HONESTY.

Unworthy of a Great Government

(Wilmington, N. C., Morning Star, June 19, 1914.)

We have heard much of late about railway mail pay—the Government and the railways, and the disposition of the former to saddle the railroads with the parcel post service with no adequate remuneration. The rural mail carriers of the country have felt the pinch of the same policy of the Government, and naturally both the carriers and the railroads see neither the justice nor the sense of requiring of them an extra service with no extra pay. And the public is with them, we believe.

This Government of ours is too great and too powerful to saddle the expense of an extra public service on the carriers without expecting to pay its way. It has been shown conclusively that the common carriers were not being allowed fair compensation for the services rendered the Government and all our boasted perfection and utility of the parcel post has been at the expense of the carriers.

It is now time for the Government and Congress to deal fairly with the railroads and not take an unfair advantage of them simply because they have the power.

* * * *

Even so eminent an authority as Mr. Louis Brandeis has advised the Interstate Commerce Commission that to him it seemed clear that the railway mail service was unremunerative to the railways, and now to lop off summarily ten to fifteen million dollars from this remuneration does not appeal to the fair-minded people of this country as just, necessary or reconcilable with any sort of governmental policy in the past.

Such a proceeding certainly strikes the average citizen not only as highly inappropriate in advance of the recommendation of the Congressional Committee, but in itself proposes an imposition upon the railroads which seems altogether unwarranted.

THE RAILROAD PEOPLE ARE PERFECTLY WILLING TO SUBMIT THEIR CONTENTIONS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, BELIEVING THAT WHEN THEY KNOW WHAT THE BILL ACTUALLY MEANS THEY WILL RESENT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ALONG THE LINE PROPOSED, not only as beneath the dignity of a nation like ours, but as a positive wielding of the big stick which should cease some time in the interest of fair play.

Congress should, at least, in our opinion, wait for its own committee to make its report and to announce to the public what it considers fair and equitable. There is a general feeling that the Bourne committee has gone into the matter thoroughly and is itself so unbiased that the public may rely on the justice of its findings.

"Trying to Put One Over"

(St. Paul, Minn., Pioneer Press, June 15, 1914.)

This paper noted a few weeks ago the serious effort that was being made by the members of the Joint Congressional Commission on Railway Pay to draw up a measure that would be at once scientific and just both to the Government and to the railways. They labored long and hard, completed their task a fortnight ago and were ready to submit their bill to Congress, with the supposed sanction of the Government and the Postmaster General. But at the last minute Senator Bourne, Chairman of the Commission, was informed that Postmaster General Burleson insisted that Congressman Moon should be allowed to submit a bill of his own, which henceforth was to be known as the Administration measure.

When the Moon bill was examined, it required no very practical eye to see that Mr.

Burleson, with or without the knowledge of the President, was trying to "slip one over" on the country.

For it contained several clauses which were in no way connected with railroad pay, but were mere contrivances on the part of the Postmaster General to grab some spoils and play politics. The Moon bill would reduce mail pay by one cent a mile as compared with the joint commission's proposed rate, thus permitting the Post Office Department to save a neat sum of $6,000,000, which would show up well in the annual report.

But it did not stop there. It proposed to subject to re-examination all assistant postmasters now in the classified service, and pave the way for the appointment of Democrats. Again, it would exempt Confederate veterans, as Union veterans are now exempted, from the regulation age limit in the appointment of fourth-class postmasters. This clause has stirred up the ire of many Congressmen. And the whole bill is so full of "stratagems and spoils" that a wise Congress will have nothing to do with it.

Unpaid Service is Confiscation

(*Atlanta, Ga., Constitution, June 20, 1914.*)

If the roads are being overpaid, we should know it from a judicial source. If they are being underpaid, we should know that, too.

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE SERVICE FOR NOTHING, EVEN FROM A RAILROAD. THAT SAVORS TOO MUCH OF CONFISCATION.

To this end there is no reason why the commission that began the mail probe should not conclude and make its report to Congress. Thus, there would be gained an accurate basis of pay.

It should not be forgotten that while the addition of the parcel post feature to the service has vastly increased the demands on the carriers, their rate of pay has remained stationary.

We do not believe the House of Representatives would perpetrate a wilful injustice. It can easily assure equity as between the Government and the roads by asking for the report of its own commission. Even Mr. Brandeis, whom no one will accuse of fondness for railroads, has stated that, in his belief, the Government is unjust in the matter of pay.

EVEN THE RAILROADS ARE ENTITLED TO A SQUARE DEAL!

Entitled to Fair Profit

(*Chicago, Ill., Tribune, June 18, 1914.*)

It is very strange that the findings of a reputable commission, made after months of study, should be thrown out of the window without warning and an executive department head's conclusions adopted. Such a proceeding calls for explanation, and if Congress respects itself an explanation will be insisted upon.

The railroads should be paid not only for the cost of the service they give, they should be allowed a fair profit.

The *Tribune* has no sympathy with the violent and demagogic spirit shown in some quarters against the railroads. It took a leading role in the fighting for railroad regulation.

It has exposed and excoriated the evils committed in the history of the railroads, high finance, nepotism, political manipulation, iniquities and inefficiencies of management. It has fought and will always fight for a square deal for the public. But a politician who expects to get any support from the *Tribune* for a play upon prejudice will be disappointed.

The American people want a square deal for all. They will approve a square deal for the railroads which represent the honest investment of thousands of persons. When they fail in this spirit the end of the American republic will be at hand.

This railway mail pay incident should be explained, and if it is a piece of politics it should be rebuked. Presumably the mail pay commission knows what the railroads in fairness should be paid. Congress should see that they are paid no less.

There seems to be a general conviction that the railroads are not being treated fairly by the Post Office Department.

—*Indianapolis News, June 19, 1914.*

Sacrificing the Railroads

(Savannah, Ga., News, June 22, 1914.)

It looks a little as if the Post Office Department were bent on making it appear that the Department is self-sustaining, even if, in order to do so, it has to be unjust to the railroads. Recently, at its instigation it is alleged, Representative Moon introduced a bill which provides a new method for paying the railroads for carrying the mails, a method which the railroads regard as grossly unfair. It would reduce the compensation of the railroads about 20 per cent., or approximately $10,000,000 a year. The railroads contend that they ought to have at least $15,000,000 more than they are now getting.

Recently Congress appointed a joint committee of Congress to investigate the whole subject of compensating the railroads for carrying the mails, and the committee has given a great deal of time to the subject. It is about ready to make a report. It does look as if Congress should do nothing in the matter until it has this report.

The Post Office Department, it is pretty safe to assume, doesn't know a great deal about the cost of carrying the mails. Its aim is to get the mails carried as cheaply as possible.

But the railroads should be given a square deal. It is reasonable to suppose that the joint committee is prepared to report a measure that would be fair as between the people and the railroads.

The people are more interested in doing what is right than in the efforts of the Post Office Department in making a record for keeping the expenses of the Department down.

It is hardly reasonable to suppose that the joint committee would report in favor of making the compensation of the railroads for carrying the mails greater than it ought to be. If it has any bias at all it is more likely to be in favor of the Government.

The Public Directly Concerned

(Norfolk, Va., Virginian Pilot, June 18, 1914.)

But the public is vitally interested in the question of railway mail compensation, to the end that it may with the least possible delay be settled on a scientific basis of fairness to all interests legitimately concerned.

Without entering into any detailed discussion of the comparative merits of the Moon bill and the recommendations of the Commission, it stands to reason that the findings of a body which has devoted more than a year to thorough and painstaking investigation of the subject are more likely to embody a proper solution of the problem sought to be solved than a bill prepared with more or less haste by the chairman of a Congressional committee whose duties are so various and so manifold as to leave but small opportunity for original research.

And, such being the case, it ought to go without saying that **CONGRESS SHOULD TAKE NO DEFINITE ACTION IN THE MATTER UNTIL IT HAS THOROUGHLY CONSIDERED AND DIGESTED THE COMMISSION'S REPORT** and the evidence upon which the findings therein contained are based.

The problem of railway mail compensation ought obviously to be approached, not with any preconceived idea of increasing or cutting down the rate of pay, but with an eye single to so adjusting the whole system to the changed conditions brought about by the inauguration and extension of the parcel post as to insure even-handed justice alike to the railroads and the Government, regardless of whether the result shall entail increased or diminished payments from the public treasury.

The railroads are entitled to no less, and the public, as represented by the Government, has no right to demand any more.

Fair Payment a Matter of Right

(Pittsburgh, Pa., Dispatch, June 14, 1914.)

It is plain that the services of the railroads in carrying the heavily increased mails are deserving of fair, though not excessive, pay. The presumption is quite strong that the nonpartisan commission which has been considering this subject for a twelve-month and has reported a bill calculated to save the Government $2,000,000 is more likely to produce a fair measure than the private author of a bill making a reduction five times greater.

Every reader of the *Dispatch* knows that it is not prejudiced in favor of the railroads. But we believe in fair pay, and where there has been such an enlargement of service as that necessitated by the parcel post, it should be honorably and reasonably paid for.

Government should set the example of being honest and fair with all its people, and that it is not is evidence of the low tone of morals prevailing among the politicians who run the Government.

—*Jackson, Mich., Patriot, June 13, 1914.*

The Proper Car-Mile Rate

(*Middletown, N. Y., Argus, June 17, 1914.*)

The suggestion of Senator Bourne, a member of the Committee on Railway Mail Pay, that the railroads should be paid a rate for carrying the mails that would give them the same net return, per car mile, that they now receive on an average from passenger traffic, is a good one.

The mails are carried on passenger trains. It costs about the same to build, equip and operate the mail cars as it does the passenger cars. There would seem to be no sound reason why a carload of mail drawn by the same engine and under the same conditions should not be paid for at the same rate as a carload of passengers. The same conditions of safety, speed, frequency and regularity are demanded in the carrying of the mails as govern the transportation of passengers.

In support of his contention Mr. Bourne further says:

> "The Post Office Department has advanced the theory that the mail shall not bear its relative proportion of expensive terminals, ticket agents, and many other things appertaining to the passenger service, but I assert this contention is not sound. The volume of passenger business depends on all of those things and they are necessary to the increase of passenger business, and, hence, necessary for mail transportation, and the Government should pay its relative proportion of same."

It is true that the expense of ticket agents could not logically be chargeable to carriage of mails, but this item would be more than offset by the greater expense of getting the mails on and off the cars and handling the mail bags at terminals. It is not the function of the Post Office Department to reduce the rate paid the railroads to a point below the cost of the service. That would amount to practical confiscation. It would be no benefit to the people to give them one cent postage at the expense of the transportation lines of the country. It would mean simply the shifting of a burden where, perhaps, it could be less easily borne. And there is so large a proportion of the population of the country that draw their daily bread from the operation of the railroads that anything tending to cripple these reacts disastrously upon the people.

Under the circumstances it is greatly to be desired that the Committee of Congress having the adjustment of these mail contracts in hand will investigate thoroughly all sides of the question, and find a solution that is equitable to the railroads as well as to the people.

Railroads Entitled to a Hearing

(*Worcester, Mass., Gazette, June 17, 1914.*)

The surmises and conjectures as to whether the railroads got too much out of former contracts ought not to be made the basis for attempts to square old accounts at this date. The railroads have the right to be heard. Congress ought not to make any new rulings as to rates until the evidence before its joint committee is presented.

The *Gazette* has never hesitated to criticise railroads or any other public service corporation when there appeared to be good cause for such criticism.

But this fact must always be kept in mind: Their welfare is the welfare of the public. They cannot be unjustly hurt without the injury being passed on to the public. There is but one safe policy to follow in treating this railroad situation.

That policy is to treat them with the utmost fairness possible and insist in return that they treat the public with the utmost fairness. As matters now stand with respect to the railway mail rates, there appears to be a wide straying from that policy.

Four Just Complaints of the Railroads

(Fall River, Mass., Herald, May 6, 1914.)

Now that the Government is taking so much interest in getting a fair deal for the public from railroads, the latter are taking the opportunity to point a finger of circumspect scorn at the Government for its unwillingness to pay a fair rate for carrying the mails.

The railroads are making out a strong case, which is getting the general endorsement of the press. They have formulated four complaints.

Under existing arrangements rates are adjusted by weighing the mails once in four years. The roads ask that this be done more often, because conditions change rapidly.

At present the roads provide the mail cars, which are of no other use to them and must be given over to the postal service. They think the railway mail should supply its own cars.

They are also required to provide terminal and messenger service for the Government at their own expense, and they object to the sliding rates of pay and conditions of service that are not definite and are affected by the discretion of the Post Office employes.

The parcel post has lately added new burdens, and under the circumstances they feel justified in their appeal for better treatment.

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DEPEND FOR ITS RECORD OF ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY UPON WHAT IT CAN SQUEEZE OUT OF THE RAILROADS.

If it is going to presume to secure value in service for the money which the public pays to the railroads it should enter court with clean hands, as it were, and see that it is itself paying the railroads value for the service which it requires of them.

Government Should Be Honest

(Jackson, Mich., Patriot, June 13, 1914.)

Government ought to be honest and fair with every person and every interest, but that is something it never has been, and probably never will be, because politicians who are not honest and fair administer the Government. A corrupt tree will not bring forth good fruit.

Look at the low credit in the markets of the world of railroad securities, and the exactions of the Government in the matter of carrying the mails. Presumably the railroads of the country will receive some compensation, after awhile, for the additional service imposed upon them in the matter of the new parcel post, but that does not help them now when they are hard pressed financially.

The Government is honest and fair in taking care of its bonded indebtedness, but practically that is where its honesty and fairness ends. The experience of the railroads with the Government in the matter of the mail service, especially during the past decade, is discouraging from any point of view.

Railroads are sorely pinched; the best of them are not earning money enough to meet the burdens imposed upon them by the Government and pay the usual dividends to their stockholders; yet the Government treats them unfairly and unjustly; and this comes from the fact that the politicians who run the Government are unfair and unjust.

The plain fact of the case is that in the last ten years the mail revenues of the big Eastern roads—the New York Central, the Pennsylvania, and the Baltimore and Ohio—have remained practically stationary, while the amount of business taken care of has doubled since 1904.

We remember that a former Postmaster General seriously proposed that the money paid for carrying the mail should be based on the actual cost of the service plus 6 per cent. Every well-informed man knows that no business can be successfully conducted on so small

While investigation may show the desirability of amendments in detail, the spirit of the Bourne plan should not be departed from—Congress should see that the legitimate expenses of the mail service are paid in full.

—Providence, R. I., Journal, June 19, 1914.

This Government of ours is too great and too powerful to saddle the expense of an extra public service on the carriers without expecting to pay its way.

—*Wilmington, N. C., Morning Star, June 19, 1914.*

a sum above its actual cost. Business would go to everlasting smash on such a basis.

GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE OF BEING HONEST AND FAIR WITH ALL ITS PEOPLE, AND THAT IT IS NOT IS EVIDENCE OF THE LOW TONE OF MORALS PREVAILING AMONG THE POLITICIANS WHO RUN THE GOVERNMENT.

Pay Should Cover Costs and Fair Profit

(*St. Louis, Mo., Republic, June 23, 1914.*)

When the facts are ascertained the pay fixed for the service should be sufficient to cover the cost and leave a fair profit.

Certainly no one can disagree with that proposition. It is peculiarly the duty of the Government to be circumspect in this matter. It is the purchaser, but acts for the seller in fixing the price.

The railroads have no choice in the matter except the choice of refusing to carry the mail, which every one knows they will not do. All they can do is to curtail train service, and that hurts the people worse than it hurts the roads.

If any member of Congress doubts this proposition let him consult the merchants of St. Louis on the through mail service out of this city at the present time.

"Payment Plainly Too Low"

(*New York Journal of Commerce, June 11, 1914.*)

The essential thing is the amount of the pay obtained in the aggregate by the roads. At present, there can be no doubt that the payment is wholly inadequate. Good reason for such a view was advanced by careful statisticians even before the adoption of the parcel post legislation, and since that act became law the ground for demanding an advance in compensation has been greatly enlarged.

The roads are not being paid in anything like the proportion they would be if they did a like amount of work for other shippers.

There has been an effort to show that they were receiving more than they were entitled to, and Postmaster General Hitchcock made an investigation some years ago with this same purpose apparently in view, at the time he was prosecuting his campaign to make the department self-supporting.

The investigation fell flat so far as the attainment of its chief object was concerned, although it, like some other inquiries of similar kind, seemed to reveal that there was considerable lack of adjustment in the payments and that some roads received more and others less than they were entitled to upon a fair basis of comparison.

Since Mr. Hitchcock's investigation, other attempts have been made in parallel directions, but there has been no material difference in their results. It is not possible to establish a "scientific" basis for paying the roads, inasmuch as the same difficulty inheres in such undertakings that is always encountered when efforts are made to show what part of railroad expenditure appertains to freight and what to passenger traffic, or how it should be divided between freight of different classes. No good or workable plan of differentiation in such matters exists.

It is, however, possible to find out about how much the roads are charging private individuals for approximately the same kind and quality of service that they are rendering the Government in connection with mail transportation, and to base the compensation upon that as a foundation.

If it be true that present freights are too high, the question may be asked why the Government, which has full power over them, has suffered these rates to go on being exacted.

If they are not too high, as most conservative men agree they are not, then the question recurs why the Government should fix its own rate of payment below that set for private persons. There is some reason at first sight to believe that the new rates, suggested in

the preliminary statement of the postal pay commission, have been framed in this way, and that they will be more helpful in establishing a good showing for the Post Office Department than in enabling the railroads to meet the demands upon them for fixed charges. The equities of the case, as well as the plain dictates of existing conditions, call for a fair return to the roads for service actually rendered.

"Snap Action" Strongly Condemned

(*Macon, Ga., Telegraph, June 20, 1914.*)

The *Telegraph* would not undertake to criticise the Moon bill or to say that the railroads ought to receive more pay for their service unless it knew more about the arrangements between the railroads and the Post Office Department.

But it does seem to us, and it will so impress all fair-minded men, that it is not fair to rush in a bill before Congress virtually setting aside the report of a special committee before that committee has had a chance of making its report.

It would be fair for Congress to have the report of that committee before taking action which might be contrary to that which the report might justify.

This "snap action" seems to bear out the contention of the railroads that they are not getting a fair deal from the Post Office Department.

As we said in the outset, the main interest which the public has in the matter is to see justice done, both to the railroads and the Government.

If the railroads are getting too little for hauling the mails they ought to be paid more. Congress certainly ought to have the benefit of the special committee's report before action on the matter is taken. With all of the lights before them the Congressmen would know better how to deal with the question.

No Share in Increased Postal Receipts

(*New York Times, June 22, 1914.*)

The Government's postal receipts increased one-third within the five years before the parcel post service was added to the strict mail service.

This increase would have been impossible without the help of the railways, and yet the railways receive nothing more for their services.

The Government income from the post office increased sixty-three millions, and none of the increase was allowed to the railways. The case between the Government and the railways is essentially the same as the case between the railways and the shippers.

The railways' gross has increased and their net has fallen. The railways are working harder and getting less money from those who employ them.

It has been a long and hard fight to convince the public that this is so, but as regards shippers in general the case has been won.

The opinion that the railway rates ought to advance is general. Yet this opinion has not animated the sentiment of Congress on the railway mail pay question.

IT IS NOW PROPOSED NOT THAT THE RAILWAY MAIL PAY SHALL BE INCREASED AT ALL, BUT THAT IT SHALL BE REDUCED.

Heretofore railway mail pay has been calculated at long intervals, and the railways carried the growth between calculations for nothing. They also furnished space in cars for which they were not paid, and what was called "side" services were exacted at terminals for nothing.

The Government has gone so far as to admit that this was wrong, and ought to be changed, in the interest of the railways and the Government's sense of fairness. So the Government's lawmakers have wrestled with the subject and have determined that the railways should be paid by the distance they carry the mails and for space which they supply, side services being abolished. There are to be a

Certainly no fair-minded person will say that the railroads, like any other employe, are not entitled to a fair wage for a service performed.

—*Corpus Christi, Tex., Caller, June 20, 1914.*

line charge and a terminal charge, and everything is scientific to the last degree.

The railways have issued a statement on the subject in which they ignore the scientific advantages of the plan. They think they have made out a case of underpayment, in fact, and they are in no mood to accept a theoretical payment of less.

They calculate that the scientific method will pay them less by $10,000,000. Senator Bourne's estimate is a reduction of $2,500,000. The railways hardly can be blamed for their indifference to the technique of the calculation.

Even Mr. Brandeis has said that the postal service was unremunerative to the railways, and now the representatives of the people are preparing to reduce it scientifically.

IN ALL CANDOR, IT MAY BE ASKED WHETHER THE ANTI-RAILWAY SENTIMENT OF CONGRESS IS THE SENTIMENT OF THE PEOPLE WHO SO GENERALLY FAVOR THE ADVANCE OF RAILWAY RATES.

Railroads Victims of Neglect

(Charlotte, N. C., Observer, April 13, 1914.)

Whether or not any railroads are granted freight rate increases or similar relief, they should no longer be denied a readjustment of the payments made them for carrying the mails.

They have to carry the mails and at the Government's price.

They are helpless against being victimized if such is the Government's attitude.

THROUGH INCONSIDERATE NEGLECT RATHER THAN WILFUL INTENTION, THEY ARE BEING VICTIMIZED AT PRESENT.

Congress has compelled them to bear the brunt of the parcel post experiment, knowing, if it gave the matter any thought, that the more successful the parcel post proved the more money the railroads, with their unchanged compensation, would lose.

The injustice done them as necessary public servants already in difficulties calls for correction at the earliest possible date.

> The railroads should be paid not only for the cost of the service they give, they should be allowed a fair profit.
>
> —*Chicago, Ill., Tribune, June 18, 1914.*

A Forced Service Uncompensated

(The Toledo Times, April 6, 1914.)

The parcel post ruined or crippled the express companies without any compensation to them. It is now proving itself a heavy burden to the railroads, also without compensation, at a time when they are under the strictest Government surveillance and undergoing a critical period in the history of their development.

If this is justice, there can be no such word as hardship in the English language.

The time has come for the American people to call upon their representatives to cease an attitude toward corporations indicating that they are to be harassed simply because they are corporations.

It is time to cease wringing unnecessary taxation from them and treating them as necessary evils if not public enemies.

The parcel post should be developed to the utmost, but it should be done with justice to all.

Is Uncle Sam a Fair Master?

(Boston, Mass., Traveler and Evening Herald, June 25, 1914.)

Uncle Sam is getting a pretty poor reputation as an employer among those whose business it is to haul the mails.

Cries of distress have come from the railroads which, while busy dodging the strong right arm of the Interstate Commerce Commission, have felt the pilfering hand of the Post Office Department in their pockets. They are not satisfied even with the rates that have been revised to allow for the tremendous increase in the mail business since the establishment of the parcel post.

Through the legal talent they are able to command the railroads can speak for themselves. The great army of parcel post distributors on city and rural routes must plod along under their burdens in order that the postal establishment may make claims of economy of administration.

A nearby Massachusetts postmaster recently threw up his job because the allowance for

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The people are more interested in doing what is right than in the efforts of the Post Office Department in making a record for keeping the expenses of the Department down.

—*Savannah, Ga., News, June 22, 1914.*

transportation of mail between the railroad station and the depot was so miserly. The appropriation for hiring horses and carriages for the parcel post service ran out and even the ramshackle equipments that the Government employed have been laid aside. Word comes from the Pacific northwest that star route carriers are quitting by scores because they have been made into freight caravans.

Having established the parcel post it is incumbent upon Congress to provide sufficient money for its operation. The niggardly allowance for horse hire and the unbusiness-like way of making contracts has been nothing short of disgraceful.

Uncle Sam need not be a lavish paymaster, but he should be able to maintain the self-respect of the country.

Railroads Properly Protesting

(*St. Louis, Mo., Star, June 16, 1914.*)

The railroads are properly protesting against the proposed pushing of the Moon bill to regulate railway mail pay at the present time. There is probably no subject, not even that of tariff schedules, which is less easily understood by the ordinary member of Congress than that of the proper compensation for carrying the mails.

In order to get at the bottom of this complicated matter, a joint committee of the House and Senate has been investigating it for some time and is expected to make a report and recommendations before long. Action before that report is made is unwise, as it would be sure to fall short of an accurate and equitable adjustment. Either the railroads would be treated unfairly or the Government would be paying too much.

It goes without saying that the roads are entitled to pay for what they do on the same general basis as other handlers of Government business. It also should go without saying that the Government should handle the transportation of the mails in the most systematic and economical manner possible and render proper service.

Be Fair

(*Corpus Christi, Tex., Caller, June 20, 1914.*)

Railroads of the United States are claiming that the business of the parcel post has increased to such an appreciable extent that they are clearly entitled to increased pay for hauling the mails of Uncle Sam.

The railroads have gone to great expense and trouble in an attempt to press their case exhaustively to the Joint Congressional Committee that is now investigating this subject. They have claimed and have attempted to prove that the railroads are very much underpaid for carrying the mails. The railroads feel that the joint committee has gone into the matter so thoroughly and is itself so unbiased that they can rely upon the justice of its findings.

Certainly no fair-minded person will say that the railroads, like any other employe, are not entitled to a fair wage for a service performed. If it be true that the railway mail carriage charges are not fair, then it is clearly a duty to remedy such conditions. Be fair!

The Government cannot afford to take service for nothing, even from a railroad. That savors too much of confiscation.

—*Atlanta, Ga., Constitution, June 20, 1914.*